

House Judiciary Committee  
ATTN: Committee Clerk  
Room #521  
House Office Building  
100 N Capitol Ave  
Lansing, MI 48933

To whom it may concern:

I am speaking from personal experience on how the current sex offender laws can impact juveniles. My very immature son had just turned 13 when it was discovered that him and his friend, age 8, were doing inappropriate sexual things. They had been friends since they were young and he was the son of family friends we had known for years.

To make a very long story short, they pressed charges against him and he was convicted with six felony counts of criminal sexual conduct. He wasn't given a consent calendar or even a probation period to confirm all of the details. He went straight to a jury trial.

During the trial my son was now 16 years old and 6'2". The jury was making their decision while looking at this grown teenager instead of picturing him as the 12-13 year old child that he was when the actual happenings took place. He told the case workers prior to and during the trial that it was childhood curiosity and the victim admits the same. You teach your children to tell the truth and admit to their mistakes and now he is a convicted sex offender and he will pay for this for the rest of his life?

How can a child under the age of 13 possibly know the ramifications of the law at that age? Does he think about going to jail? Does he even know what it means to be a registered sex offender? He is a child, he does not think like an adult.

What benefit could lawmakers possibly think that this has for children? This isn't a fair punishment. At such a young age, their lives have already been ruined as they have a criminal background because of something they did as a child. On top of the six felony charges on my son's record, now the law thinks the whole world should know this for the rest of his life by placing him on the registry? What kind of life is this for these children? There should be justice to rehabilitate them. But instead they can't live on a college campus, they have difficulty getting a job, they can't live in certain places, etc. There is no normalcy to their future with this punishment and the law makes it hard for these children to have an aspiring future. As parents, we do everything we can to help them move forward with an ordinary life.

The law is trying to protect the 15-17 year olds, but what about the under 14 year olds? There should be no requirement for those that offended when they were under the age of 14 to register as adult sex offenders; this is cruel and unjust punishment. They barely know everything about sex at that age. If it is determined by a professional that they are not a threat to the public, there is no reason for them to be on this registry for the rest of their lives.

These kids deserve a chance to have a good, productive life and the law (as it is now) is preventing this from happening. The laws are the same for these children as they are for 60 year old men that molest 5 year olds. Please consider this very important change in this law.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,